

**In The Specification**

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 9, lines 13 – 19 with the following paragraph:

A PET polymer is a polymer obtained by reacting terephthalic acid or a C<sub>1</sub> - C<sub>4</sub> dialkylterephthalate such as dimethylterephthalate, in an amount of at least 60 mole% based on the ~~weight~~ moles of all aromatic carboxylic acids and their esters, and ethylene glycol in an amount of at least 60 mole% based on the moles of all diols. It is also preferable that the diacid component is terephthalic acid and the diol component is ethylene glycol. The mole percentage for all the diacid component(s) totals 100 mole %, and the mole percentage for all the diol component(s) totals 100 mole %.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 35, line 15-29 with the following paragraph:

In a conventional process, 0.5 to about 0.69 lt.V. pellets are crystallized in two fluidized beds using a countercurrent flow of air, followed by annealing in third vessel using nitrogen gas and then fed to separate vessel at higher temperatures and lower gas flow rate (nitrogen) than used in the crystallization zone to further polycondense the pellets in the solid state and thereby increase their weight-average molecular weight and corresponding lt.V. to about 0.7 to 1.15, which is a costly process. In the process of the invention, high lt.V. pellets in the range of 0.7 to 1.15 may be crystallized while avoiding the costly step of solid stating. Thus, in one embodiment of the invention, the process of steps a2) and b) may further comprise c) drying the crystallized PET pellets having an lt.V. ranging from 0.7 to 1.15 in a drying zone at a zone temperature of at least 140°C, and d) introducing the dried pellets into an extrusion zone to form molten PET polymer, in the absence of a step for solid stating the pellets. By solid stating is meant any process, during or after crystallization and before the drying step conducted immediately prior to introducing the pellets into a melt extruder, which increases the molecular weight of pellets in the solid state.

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Please replace the paragraph on page 8, lines 27 – page 9, line 6 with the following amended paragraph:

Any technique used for making the polyester polymer is not limited. Typically, a polyester polymer is made by polycondensing polyesters in the melt phase. Examples of suitable polyester polymers include polyalkylene terephthalate homopolymers and copolymers modified with less than 40 mole%, preferably less than 15 mole%, most preferably less than 10 mole%, of a chain disrupting monomer (collectively referred to for brevity as "PAT") and polyalkylene naphthalate homopolymers and copolymers modified with less than 40 mole %, preferably less than 15 mole%, most preferably less than 10 mole%, of a chain disrupting monomer (collectively referred to herein as "PAN"), and blends of PAT and PAN. The preferred polyester polymer is polyalkylene terephthalate, and most preferred is polyethylene terephthalate.